

## **Conflict and Culture Across Time and Space: Work and Legacy of Evert van de Vliert**

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### **Abstract**

Four former PhD-students reflect on the work and legacy of their mentor Evert van de Vliert, emeritus professor at the University of Groningen in the Netherlands, and recipient of the 2005 Lifetime Achievement Award of the *International Association for Conflict Management* (IACM). We review two major contributions pioneered by Van de Vliert: Theory on the cognitive, motivational, and affective underpinnings of interpersonal conflict management in private and professional settings and theory on the climate-economic underpinnings of human cultural institutions and behavioral biases. In addition, we share personal anecdotes from our time as PhD-students and collaborators of Evert van de Vliert. Throughout we touch on lessons learned for doing science and mentoring the next generation.

## **Introduction**

Science is teamwork. Still, teams rely on leaders who set inspirational goals, coordinate individual task activities, and make sure that the required resources are available and appropriately distributed. Without those leaders, science would not move forward and would not produce the cumulative insights that, at some point, benefit society. Evert van de Vliert has been this leader to us, and to many others. In this tribute, we celebrate some of Evert's academic achievements and, along the lines, share personal anecdotes. Our stories not only reveal the broad scope of topics and themes Evert worked on, contributions over a lifetime of research which received many honors, including the *International Association for Conflict Management (IACM) 2005 Lifetime Achievement Award* in Seville, Spain. Our stories showcase the day-to-day work experiences we all had, and from which we learned how to be leader and mentor and supervisor in our own teams of students and collaborators.

In this tribute, we first provide an overview of Evert's career and summarize some of the key areas in which he worked. The next three sections provide personal histories written by three of Evert's former PhD students, Martin Euwema, Gerben van der Vegt, and Esther Kluwer, who reflect on the collaborative work and the personal and academic imprints he left on each of us. We conclude this tribute with some lessons learned, in particular those that can be applied to current academic practice and scholarly endeavors.

## **A Career in Science: From Roles to Conflict to Culture**

As we write this Tribute, Evert van de Vliert (1940) is professor emeritus of organizational and applied social psychology at the University of Groningen in the Netherlands. Evert received his PhD from the Free University in Amsterdam in 1973, and held researcher and teacher positions at the Free University in Amsterdam, at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland, at the Royal Military Academy in Breda, and at the University of Bergen in Norway. He has published more than 200 articles in a variety of journals including

*Science, Behavioral and Brain Sciences, Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, Academy of Management Review, Academy of Management Journal, Journal of Applied Psychology, Journal of Environmental Psychology, and Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*. For his academic achievements, Evert received numerous awards, including the *Lifetime Achievement Award* from the International Association for Conflict Management (2005), the *Fellow Award* from the International Association of Applied Psychology (2014), the *Companion of the Order of Orange-Nassau* (Royal Honor, 2004), the *Most Influential Article Award* from the Academy of Management (2000), and the *Nyfer Award* for excellent research on the relationship between culture and economy (1997).

Throughout his career, Evert contributed to the next generation of scientists in various roles and capacities. He served as chairman of the Dutch Research Association of Social and Organizational Psychologists (1984-1989), was research director of the national Graduate School for social and organizational psychology (Kurt Lewin Institute; 1993-1996), served as president of the International Association for Conflict Management (1994-1995), and was a member of the International Advisory Board of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (2001-2006). Closer to home, Evert supervised many PhD students, several of whom became full professor themselves—in addition to the four authors of this Tribute, these include Ellen Giebels (Twente University), Aukje Nauta (University of Amsterdam), Onne Janssen (University of Groningen), Mariët Hagedoorn (University of Groningen), and Xu Huang (Hong Kong Baptist University).

### **A Time for Conflict**

Starting out with a strong interest in role theory and how it could be used to enhance organizational effectiveness, Evert's early claim to fame was his profound contribution to conflict theory. In conjunction with academic leaders such as Blake and Mouton (1981) and Pruitt and Rubin (1986), Evert developed a research program into the cognitive and

motivational underpinnings of strategic choices in conflict and negotiation. His focus on dual concern—a concern for oneself along with a concern for the protagonist—was well-defined and theoretically elaborated upon in his 1997 book *Complex Interpersonal Conflict Behavior*. It is cited over 400 times, and provides a profound theoretical basis for predicting and understanding how and why individuals—employees, managers, husbands and wives, toddlers even—manage and regulate the interpersonal conflicts at work and in their private lives.

The book was the outcome of a long-standing line of research that Evert initiated with several of his PhD-students, several of the current authors included. Evert developed the parsimonious and widely used diagnostic tool *DUTch Conflict Handling Test* (DUTCH; Van de Vliert & Kabanoff, 1990; Van de Vliert & Euwema, 1994; Janssen & Van de Vliert, 1996; also see De Dreu et al., 2001). With Euwema, Janssen and Nauta, he examined how different conflict management strategies—forcing, avoiding, yielding, problem-solving—alone and in interaction produce collectively beneficial outcomes or, less beneficial one-sided victories and resentment (Van de Vliert & Euwema, 1994; Van de Vliert, Huismans, & Euwema, 1995; Janssen & Van de Vliert, 1996; Van de Vliert, Nauta, Giebels & Janssen, 1999; also see Emans, Munduate, Klaver & Van de Vliert, 2003). With De Dreu and Giebels, he examined these behavioral strategies, and their cognitive-motivational underpinnings, in the context of bargaining and negotiation (e.g., De Dreu, Emans & Van de Vliert, 1992a, 1992b; De Dreu, Carnevale, Emans & Van de Vliert, 1994; De Dreu, 1995; De Dreu, Giebels & Van de Vliert, 1998; Giebels, De Dreu, & Van de Vliert, 2000). With Kluwer, he examined conflict strategies and causal underpinnings in the context of close relationships (Kluwer, Heesink & Van de Vliert, 1997, 1998, 1999).

In addition to his contributions to our understanding of what predicts strategic behavior in conflict and negotiation, Evert pioneered the idea that conflict at work is not

necessarily destructive, and can be used to promote team performance and innovation (Van de Vliert & De Dreu, 1994; Janssen, Van de Vliert & Veenstra, 1999). The distinction between “destructive” socio-emotional conflict and “constructive” task-oriented conflict was further developed in an edited volume (De Dreu & Van de Vliert, 1997) that had a strong impact on conflict research and theory, especially in the organizational sciences (see also De Dreu & Weingart, 2003; Jehn, 1995; De Wit et al., 2012).

### **A Time for Climatic Cultures**

From the early 2000s onwards, Evert’s scientific interests and contributions shifted away from individual- and group-level conflicts, and towards societal-level cultural practices and profiles. In a study with Nico van Yperen (Van de Vliert & Van Yperen, 1996), he discovered that, across nations, role overload related to ambient temperature at the country-level—warmer countries show higher role overload. It led to an innovative program of research that accumulated in an evolutionary cultural perspective on the relationship between climatic pressures, the quality of socio-economic institutions within societies, and human cultural practices and behavioral biases (e.g., Fischer & Van de Vliert, 2011; Van de Vliert, 2011, 2015; Van de Vliert & Tol, 2014).

This truly interdisciplinary program of research, conducted with a broad range of collaborators, accumulated in a ground-breaking review paper, published in the prestigious *Brain and Behavioral Sciences* (Van de Vliert, 2013). There, Evert asks why fundamental freedom is so unevenly distributed across the earth, and proposes that humans adapt their needs, stresses, and choices of goals, means, and outcomes to the livability of their habitat. Evert predicts that freedom is expected to be lowest in poor populations threatened by demanding thermal climates, intermediate in populations comforted by undemanding temperate climates irrespective of income per head, and highest in rich populations challenged by demanding thermal climates.

Support for his hypothesis is seen in survey data across 85 countries and 15 Chinese provinces and fits the results of prior studies comprising 174 countries and the 50 states in the United States. Empirical support covers freedom from want, freedom from fear, freedom of expression and participation, freedom from discrimination, and freedom to develop and realize one's human potential. Projecting from the theory suggests that by 2112 several rich populations will be challenged to defend current levels of freedom against worsening climate-economic livability. It is telling that current times already provide ample evidence—albeit anecdotal—that richer populations across the earth indeed face increasing outside pressures on their habitat and, to name but one example, have difficulty regulating increasing migration flows.

### **A Mentor in Science: Three Personal Reflections**

In much of the above work, Evert worked in close collaboration with his PhD students. He would initiate projects and yet provide substantial freedom to the student to further expand, redirect, or totally change the project. Evert invested in his students. Three of us share some of our unique and shared experiences with Evert's stewardship at the time we were his PhD student.

#### **Martin Euwema on Role Conflict and Real Conflicts**

Evert and I met for the first time at a conference at Utrecht University on conflict management. This was in mid-eighties and Evert was associate professor at the Free University (Amsterdam) and also professor at the Royal Military Academy of the Netherlands. I was a student and assisting with practical issues at this conference and to my surprise this professor took initiative to have a conversation with me. And even more surprising, he encouraged me to apply for a position as junior researcher (nowadays PhD student) at the Free University. Evert had received a grant to study role-conflicts in organizations. I had not considered an academic career so far, however reading the

advertisement and the related book, and after having met Evert, I was highly motivated and also empowered by him, to apply. And we embarked in the fall of 1985 on a great journey together. At that time, Evert was doing quite a lot of research on role theory, deviant role behaviors and role conflicts (Allen & Van de Vliert, 1984; 2012). He used role theory to analyze—among other phenomena—conflict behaviors and to design interventions related to conflict. Evert was particularly keen on challenging any assumptions on role behaviors. He always was looking to play with roles so that the current situation would be challenged. He relied on his large experience as an organizational consultant, and his experiences in the military. And he introduced many fascinating concepts, such as “paradoxical interventions.” Among these was the flexible use of dress code. If he would consult with a team with too much of a country club and informal style, he would deliberately opt to dress as formal as possible (tie and jacket for starters).

Evert disliked the status quo and always looked for improvement. This is reflected in his work on role transitions and role conflicts, as well as his ground-breaking thoughts on conflict escalation, including the effects of siding by third-parties (Van de Vliert, 1981a; 1981b) and a focus on the positive sides of conflict escalation (Van de Vliert, 1985; also see Van de Vliert & De Dreu, 1994). He liked to engage in discussions on theory and research and was open to new approaches. A striking example of this was my PhD plan. In the budget, €20.000 was reserved to pay subjects for participating in experiments. When I argued I did not believe much in these experiments, and wanted to invest the money in development of video-vignettes to use in training settings, Evert accepted this. We invented new forms of research, and designed training in conflict management for managers. As part of the training, the managers participated in structured role plays that we videotaped and coded, and we used portable heart-rate measures to measure on-line their stress responsiveness.



Being highly disciplined, structured and planned himself, Evert much appreciated chaos, set-backs and rapid changes in projects. Studying role conflicts for Evert meant to explore further interdependence relations and conflict behavior. At these domains we worked together in developing new theories and new measures. Using the video-fragments, we assessed how military officers, policemen and nurse managers responded to deviating role behaviors. For example, how would a nurse manager respond to a physician or a nurse who was treating wounds not according to the rules, or a military officer responding to his or her superior compared to their direct reports (Vliert, Euwema, Dispa, & Vrij, 1988; Van de Vliert & Hordijk, 1989).

In these years, Evert used to train to the Royal Military Academy and work and write in their library. After a long day, I asked him what he had been doing all day, and if he was satisfied. Evert: "Today I wrote half a page. And I think it is quite good, so I am really happy!" For me, this was quite a reality check, and a lesson to be learned. Evert would be polishing his papers until they would really shine. In these projects, not only the methods were rather innovative, we also developed new measures, for example for conflict styles. In the meantime, Evert moved to the University of Groningen, and his team was largely empowered with Carsten De Dreu and Aukje Nauta, soon to be followed by Esther Kluwer, Ellen Giebels, and many more. Carsten, being much more of a talented experimentalist than I was, further developed these scales into the DUTCH (the Dutch test of Conflict Management), which is still used worldwide in conflict research (De Dreu et al, 2001).

The videotapes of the conflicts in our research project were scored with teams of trained observers (one of the most engaged observers here was Arnold Bakker, now professor at Erasmus University Rotterdam). And with this material we, and particularly Evert, developed and tested the theory of Conglomerate Conflict Behavior (CCB; Van de Vliert & Euwema, 1994; Van De Vliert, Euwema & Huismans, 1995). The idea was that conflict

behavior should be analyzed as a conglomerate, as the components are typically combined simultaneously and sequentially. This theory received a most influential article award from the Academy of Management, and resulted in a new line of research. One of the core elements based on this theory is the positive impact of forcing behavior, when combined with other styles (Van de Vliert, Nauta, Euwema, & Janssen, 1997; Emans, Munduate, Klaver & Van de Vliert, 2003), and the recognition that more complex patterns of managerial conflict behavior, result in more effective conflict management (Munduate, Ganaza, Peiro, & Euwema, 1999).

This line of research resulted in one of Evert's most important books, his 1997 work *Complex Interpersonal Conflict Behaviour: Theoretical Frontiers*. In this book, he not only summarizes decades of conflict behavior research, but also further developed the CCB theory. Since its publication, the book has become a standard frame of reference for researchers on conflict behavior. During this project, Evert showed his great appreciation of constructive conflict and feedback. He would ask us, as young and upcoming researchers, to give our most challenging criticism, and he always appreciated criticism and discussing issues to the bone. As academic writing can be a masochistic exercise, he trained his PhDs to appreciate feedback. So, after receiving a review letter, he would call, saying: "I have good news, and bad news. What do you want to hear first?" "The bad news is, our paper is rejected. The good news is, we received in total 128 points of criticism, so we can learn a lot from this!" For sure, this was not a cynical joke, as he truly meant it and would give every point of criticism serious consideration.

Evert was highly aware that academic writing is difficult to master, and he would put a lot of effort in mentoring. His dedication could be somewhat intimidating. Being the inventor of the 'clean desk', Evert's office and desk indeed would be empty, except for your paper. And it would be covered with comments in three colors (red: very important, key discussion points; blue: important; black: minor comments). After working on one of my manuscripts

with all these pens, Evert developed RSI in his fingers (caused by correcting too many mistakes). For him, it was time to move to the computer.

Evert highly respects colleagues who are outstanding in the field. In the 1980s, these were mostly US scholars. Evert connected to them, and untiringly introduced his PhDs and colleagues into this network. Many have benefited a lot, and followed in his footsteps as conflict researchers and, for example, as president of *IACM*. This development was not so evident at the start, as Evert really was and is a modest person, not wanting to take the lead, if he could not see the necessary and added value of his presence. So, in the starting years Evert needed some persuasion to take up academic leadership roles, also within *IACM*. Also in his leadership, Evert would practice conflict theories, especially in exercising leadership role behavior. One example of this, which I still use on my training and classes, is Evert acting as dean and chairing meetings of the full professors at the university. As always and everywhere, these professors used abundantly their pocket-veto, agreeing on decisions made but not acting on them. Evert happily told me: “I had to use forcing here. So, I acted as if I was really angry, I hit the table, told the professors they should be ashamed of themselves, and then dismissed the meeting. The effect was wonderful, as afterwards all came individually to apologize and the culture changed”. On my question if he was sincerely so angry, he mentioned: ‘No, however you have to bring of course in a convincing way the message’. Role theory-in-action.

Evert was interested in a great variety of topics. I was very happy and honored to work together with him on global leadership. We co-supervised together my first PhD at KU Leuven, now professor Hein Wendt. And also in this process I learned a lot from Evert. Evert indeed is a great and creative scholar, always testing his theory in practice. Moreover, he is a most amazing mentor, who truly cared. Not in the last together with his wife Evy who would

always be there, sincerely interested, and keeping everyone down to earth with her practical wisdom.

### **Gerben van der Vegt on Team Interdependencies**

I first read some of Evert's work, in the early nineties when I was a Master's student at the University of Utrecht. I had to study several of his articles about conflict and conflict management as part of a negotiation and conflict management class, and I was impressed by their freshness and clarity. It was one of the reasons why I decided to study conflict for my Master's thesis project. Supervised by Martin Euwema, I assisted Onne Janssen with a study focusing on the relationships between interdependence, motivation, and conflict. As part of his PhD project, supervised by Evert and Martin, Onne was working on an experiment in which undergraduate students were asked to resolve a conflict scenario. They worked under conditions of either positive interdependence (cooperation) or negative interdependence (competition; Deutsch, 1973) and answered questions about their concerns for their own and the other's goals after the interaction. Their interactions were videotaped and, together with two other research assistants, I coded the conflict behaviors of the participants. In return, I could use part of Onne's data to test my own hypotheses about the moderating role of trait dominance in the proposed relationships. Results of the experiment confirmed the hypothesis that the stronger other-concern of cooperatively-motivated, compared to competitively motivated parties, fostered more accommodating, more problem solving, more compromising, and less forcing, resulting in more de-escalation or less escalation of conflict (Janssen & Van de Vliert, 1996). Dominance turned out to be directly related to participants' motivation and conflict behavior; it did not moderate the effects of interdependence on motivation and conflict behavior.

When, soon after my graduation there was a vacancy for a PhD position at the University of Groningen, supervised by Evert and Ben Emans, I decided to apply and got the

job. The purpose of the project was to examine the role of interdependence in organizational work teams, building on the work of Kelly and Thibaut (1978). It soon turned out that it was difficult to directly apply their work in real-life work teams. Interdependence structures in work teams are messy and the concepts of reflexive control, fate control, and behavioral control are hard to operationalize in a field study. We therefore decided to distinguish between task and outcome interdependence as two basic forms of interdependence that can be distinguished in work groups. Task interdependence refers to the extent to which group members must exchange information and resources or actually work together to complete their jobs. Outcome interdependence is the degree to which the significant outcomes an individual receives depend on the performance of others; this is to a large extent determined by the team's goals, the way team members receive feedback, and are rewarded for their performance. We noticed that several studies had already examined the role of task and outcome interdependence for team effectiveness, but that little was known about how group members affectively respond to intragroup interdependence. We set out to study this relationship in a series of field studies.

In a first study (Van der Vegt, Emans, & Van de Vliert, 1998), we developed scales to measure task and outcome interdependence and collected data from a sample of police officers. The results showed that task and outcome interdependence explained variance in employees' sense of responsibility for others' work as well as job and team satisfaction, over and above the variance explained by other important job characteristics, such as task identity, skill variety, task autonomy, and task significance.

During the data collection phase of our first study, I had attended a multivariate data analysis course taught by Tom Snijders from the Sociology department. He had done extensive research on multilevel analysis and made us aware of the importance of attending to levels-of-analysis issues in team research. After several discussions it became clear to us that

individual team members oftentimes vary in their degree of task interdependence and that, therefore, task interdependence should be conceptualized as an individual-level variable, whereas outcome interdependence is determined by team goal, feedback, and reward systems and should be conceptualized as a group characteristic. In a series of studies (Van der Vegt, Emans, & Van de Vliert, 2000; Van der Vegt, Emans, & Van de Vliert, 2001), we therefore tested a cross-level model of intrateam interdependence in which the relationship between individual team members' task interdependence, on the one hand, and their satisfaction and commitment on the other, was moderated by the degree of team-level outcome interdependence. Interestingly, we found the positive relations between task interdependence and affective outcomes to be stronger in high outcome interdependent teams than in low outcome interdependent teams. A proper match between high task interdependence and high group-level outcome interdependence produced more positive affective responses than "low-high" and "high-low" mismatches. Moreover, high levels of job complexity mitigated the unfavorable effects of mismatched task and outcome interdependence. These papers formed the core of my dissertation.

After completing my PhD, I continued to work with Evert on the role of interdependence in work teams. We examined how the relationship between functional dissimilarity of team members and their helping behavior and organizational citizenship behavior depended on the degree of task and outcome interdependence (Van der Vegt, Van de Vliert & Oosterhof, 2003; Van der Vegt & Van de Vliert, 2005). We consistently found evidence for the "congruence hypothesis of intrateam interdependence" and developed a framework offering guidelines to practitioners for how to manage intrateam interdependencies (Van der Vegt & Van de Vliert, 2002). Evert considered this last step very important: A theoretical insight is interesting, but it is even more interesting if we can use these insights to improve the functioning of organizations. In writing this practitioner paper, Evert's

background in management consulting, and his knowledge about how teams and organizations work in practice, turned out to be invaluable.

Looking back at the time I have worked with Evert, I cannot overstate the impact he has had as a teacher and mentor. He had regular meetings with his PhD students (rarely longer than 30 minutes because Evert was convinced that long meetings are a waste of time) to discuss conceptual models, initial findings, and next steps. Students had to hand in printed materials and an agenda for the meeting well in advance otherwise it would be canceled. A lot of Evert's supervision was focused on teaching students the art of writing. After handing in a printed version of a draft paper, Evert would usually take a couple of days to read and re-read the paper, after which he provided written feedback (this was the time of Word Perfect 5.1!). Texts were always chockfull of comments and specific suggestions, but also greatly helped to improve clarity, consistency and the logical flow of arguments. I remember that in one of my first papers, I had consistently used the term 'correlation' in the Theory section to refer to the relationship between constructs. The first four or five times the term 'correlation' appeared, Evert corrected the error. The next time, he wrote in the margin "Cor is dead". After he had provided written feedback, a face-to-face session followed in which Evert explained in detail which parts of the draft needed work and why. This feedback was almost always like gold, marked by humor and brutal honesty. These lessons have strongly influenced the way many of his former PhD students think about organizational research, and continue to affect how I supervise my own students today.

### **Esther Kluwer on Conflict in Close Relationships**

My first memory of Evert was when I was a graduate student in Groningen, more than 20 years ago (1994-1998). He was teaching a class on conflict management and negotiation and he explained to us the concepts of distributive versus integrative bargaining. He illustrated this with the problem of the two sisters who fought over an orange. They both

wanted the orange and decided to split the orange in half. Had they asked for why the other wanted the orange, they would have found out that one sister wanted the juice because she was thirsty while the other wanted the peel because she was baking a cake. The fixed pie bias stood in the way of an integrative agreement where one got the peel and the other the juice. I still use this same, somewhat cheesy example, and it still works well.

The next thing I remember was that Evert stood on the desk in front of the class room in ski-position to illustrate what he called a “reverse intervention” (in Dutch: *Andersom Intervenieren*) in a class on organizational change. When skiers approach a dangerous or difficult piece of the slope, their automatic response is to bend their knees to break their fall. However, this makes the skier only go faster, and falling harder. A reversing intervention – standing up instead of bending the knees –causes the skier to slow down, which protects the skier from falling. Evert used this example to explain how people often get stuck in interaction patterns of offensive vs defensive behavior as would be predicted by Leary’s interpersonal theory. Breaking out of these patterns requires a non-automatic diagonal switch to the constructive side of the model (from offensive to receptive or from defensive to pro-active), which would then stimulate the other conflict party to do the same. I don’t believe that this “reverse intervention” model was ever tested empirically, but it resembles a process called accommodation in the relationship literature (Rusbult et al., 1991). More importantly, I still teach this model in my own classes and students always find it a very insightful way to understand how conflict can be de-escalated. Moreover, both examples show that Evert’s classes were never boring; he was always stirring things up to make you actually process the information so that the knowledge would stick. And so it did. Talk about impact!

Evert was not only a lecturer during my (under)graduate time but also my supervisor during my PhD. The topic of my PhD was the division of paid and family work across the transition to parenthood. Even though close relationships research was not his area of



expertise, we found common ground in the topic of conflict management. I studied marital conflict over the division of labor when partners become parents, which at that time had not received much attention in the literature. In our first article (Kluwer, Heesink, & Van de Vliert, 1996), we studied factors that determine the frequency of marital conflict over the division of labor in a sample of Dutch couples before and after their transition to parenthood. The findings showed that couples experienced more conflict over housework than over paid work and that conflict over housework was predicted by the wife's, but not the husband's, dissatisfaction about the division of labor. Wives' dissatisfaction was related to their own overspending and their husband's underspending in housework, which was related to their own and their spouse's contribution to family work. Conflict about paid work revolved around husbands spending too much time on paid work. Although this was the first study, actually meant as a pilot for a large longitudinal study, Evert's bold suggestion was to send it to the high-impact journal *JMF*. I would have never done this without his encouragement. His argument was: "nothing ventured, nothing gained".

The second article (Kluwer, Heesink, & Van de Vliert, 1997) explored the behavioral processes and outcomes of conflict over the division of labor. A large survey of 494 Dutch couples showed that constructive and destructive conflict outcomes were predicted by spouses' discontent over the division of labor via marital interaction. The wife's discontent over housework was positively related to wife-demand/husband-withdraw interaction, which, in turn, predicted destructive conflict outcomes. Constructive conflict outcomes were predicted by mutually integrative interaction, which was, in turn, predicted by lower levels of discontent over the division of labor. Finally, traditional wives and wives with a traditional husband were more inclined to avoid conflict about the division of labor--despite their discontent--than egalitarian wives and wives with egalitarian husbands.

The third article (Kluwer, Heesink, & Van de Vliert, 2000) addressed couples' reports of their attempts to maintain or change a gendered division of labor through conflict interactions. Two field experiments in which spouses responded to scenarios showed that wives more often than husbands desired a change in their spouses' contribution. Spouses reported more wife-demand/husband-withdraw than husband-demand/wife-withdraw interaction during hypothetical conflict over the division of labor, but only when the wife desired a change in her spouse's contribution. Together, the data implied that wife-demand/husband-withdraw interaction is a likely response to the asymmetrically structured conflict situation in which the wife is discontent with her husband's contribution to housework, while her husband wants to maintain the status quo. We further showed that defenders of the status quo were more likely to reach their goal than complainants. In the role of complainant, wives were more likely expected to reach their goal than were their husbands, but only when the conflict issue concerned their own gender stereotypical domain (i.e., family work). This *status quo effect* was replicated in a later study (Kluwer, 1998).

Finally, we published a 3-wave longitudinal study among 293 couples, in which we studied the determinants of husbands' and wives' fairness judgments regarding the division of labor across the transition to parenthood (Kluwer, Heesink, & Van de Vliert, 2002). We tested predictions derived from Major (1994) and Thompson's (1991) *distributive justice framework* that perceptions of fairness regarding the division of labor are affected by (a) wants and values, (b) social comparisons, and (c) procedural justice. The model was supported for wives at all waves. For husbands, wants and values and social comparisons were the main predictors of fairness perceptions. In general, the model was consistently supported across the transition to parenthood. Support was also found for the long-term influence of the variables in the model on husbands' and wives' perceptions of fairness across the transition to parenthood.

My collaboration with Evert has been both enjoyable and productive. He was not only intellectually stimulating but also gave me the freedom to develop my own research questions and hypotheses and to conduct the research that I wanted to do, even though marital conflict was not his *core business*. I greatly valued his careful and punctual hand-written feedback on manuscripts and his advice on academic matters along the way. Evert's role was the "devil's advocate": he was a critical reader that always asked the right, unexpected, questions that made you think twice about a theory or hypothesis. His unorthodox thinking has been an inspiration for many and has resulted in innovative research, such as his studies on the relationship between ambient temperature and economic prosperity (e.g., Van de Vliert,, 2006; Van de Vliert, Kluwer & Lynn, 2000; Van de Vliert & Van Yperen, 1996).

### **Closing Remarks**

When we asked Evert to read and comment on an earlier draft of this Tribute, he was both moved and moving. Moved by reading that we learned so much from him, although he also noticed that this was "what he was supposed to do." To us, what he did was indeed what he was supposed to do, yet he did so well beyond "the call of duty." Evert had little to add, except that he advised to cap the number of PhD-students one mentors at one point in time at a maximum of 5; higher numbers would imply less time and energy for each of them. Indeed, each of us were in a small cohort and within this small cohort we got all we needed—no single manuscript stayed on Evert's desk for more than one week—and many of us became long-term friends.

In addition to moved, Evert was also moving. In fact, we caught him while he was packing boxes and throwing out stuff, preparing to leave the northern part of the Netherlands for the middle part: Somewhat closer to the equator and certainly above sea-level. Here again, Evert takes his scientific discoveries as serious as one can ever do. Our tribute caught him in the middle of taking the next step in his life, together with Evy, looking ahead to his new

study. There, without doubt, new theories and innovating papers will be written. We decided to leave him doing that, and asked no more. We do, however, look forward to what else Evert will contribute to our understanding of conflict and culture across time and space.

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